

BACKGROUND GUIDE



Agenda: Evaluating National Security Measures, Counter-Terrorism Strategies, and the Path Forward for Peace with special emphasis on the Pahalgam Terrorist Attack.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

It is an honour to welcome you to this critical session of the **Lok Sabha Committee on National Security** at NVMUN. Our committee has been tasked with a weighty agenda: evaluating national security measures, counter-terrorism strategies, and the path forward for peace, with special emphasis on the tragic April 22, 2025 attack at Pahalgam. The recent Pahalgam assault – where five armed terrorists killed 26 civilian tourists – has shocked India and the world pib.gov.in. This violence, which targeted mostly Hindu pilgrims (among them a Nepali national) and even a local Muslim, underlines deep challenges in Jammu & Kashmir and beyond. As delegates, you will examine India's response (including **Operation Sindoor**), regional repercussions, and the broader international framework for combating terrorism.

We urge you to review the background materials carefully and consider all perspectives. The Executive Board expects delegates to propose effective solutions that uphold human rights and international law while ensuring security. We look forward to your informed debate on this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Lok Sabha Committee Executive Board

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The **Lok Sabha Committee on National Security** simulates India's parliamentary oversight of internal security policy. In reality, the Lok Sabha (Lower House of India's Parliament) forms Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSCs) on Home Affairs, Defence, and similar portfolios pib.gov.in. These committees (typically 31 members each) review legislation, budgets, and policies affecting security and counter-terrorism. For NVMUN, this special committee will examine how India and its partners respond to terrorism within a legal and international framework. The Lok Sabha Committee traditionally includes government and opposition members, and consults national security agencies. It has broad mandate to evaluate existing laws (like the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act), counter-radicalisation programs, intelligence coordination, and international treaties. Delegates should bear in mind India's dual goals: protecting citizens and preserving civil liberties, as debated in Parliament and by experts pib.gov.in.

Mandate of the Committee

The committee's mandate is to **evaluate and recommend measures** that strengthen India's national security and counter-terrorism capabilities, particularly in light of the Pahalgam attack.

This includes:

- **Reviewing legislation and policies** related to terrorism financing, intelligence sharing, border security, and law enforcement.
- **Assessing inter-agency coordination** (e.g. National Investigation Agency, state police forces, intelligence agencies) to prevent attacks pib.gov.in.
- **Ensuring compliance with international obligations**, such as UN Security Council resolutions on terrorism (e.g. Res 1373).
- **Advising on regional diplomacy** to reduce cross-border threats, including relations with Pakistan and neighbouring countries.
- **Promoting peace and stability** in Jammu & Kashmir by addressing underlying causes of unrest and improving development.

Delegates should focus on balancing robust security measures with transparency and human rights. The committee may suggest new policies, international cooperation, or parliamentary oversight mechanisms.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Recent events have focused global attention on South Asia. On 22 April 2025, five armed terrorists attacked a tourist group near Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, killing 26 civilians pib.gov.in mea.gov.in. This horrendous act – marked by extreme cruelty toward holiday families – represents one of the deadliest attacks in India since the 2008 Mumbai siege. The attackers targeted Hindus but also killed a Christian tourist and a local Muslim, indicating an aim to incite communal strife. The *modus operandi* suggested careful planning and external support.

India quickly called the attack “barbaric” and blamed Pakistan-backed militants. The Government of India reported that Pakistan-trained members of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) perpetrated the assault through an affiliated front group, *The Resistance Front* (TRF) mea.gov.in mea.gov.in. Indian officials argue the aim was to disrupt Kashmir’s returning normalcy and hurt its tourism-based economy mea.gov.in. Public outcry and security concerns have since dominated the debate.

Given this context, our agenda examines **national security measures and counter-terrorism strategies** in India and how they intersect with international law and peace efforts. We will analyze: (a) India’s legal and military response to cross-border terrorism; (b) past and potential UN resolutions on terrorism; (c) regional security dynamics; and (d) longer-term solutions to instability in Jammu & Kashmir. Delegates should emphasize factual analysis (from credible government/UN sources) and think creatively about policy recommendations.

BACKGROUND OF THE AGENDA

Terrorism and insurgency have been persistent issues in Jammu & Kashmir for decades. Since partition in 1947, the region has been contested, and militant groups have operated with varying degrees of outside support. In recent years, India has seen a rise in both domestic militancy (e.g. in Naxalite areas) and Islamist terrorism linked to groups like LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammad. The Pahalgam attack reflects these trends and stresses the importance of adaptive security policies.

Prior to April 2025, Indian authorities reported disruptions of multiple terror plots originating from Pakistan-based networks. For instance, India had informed the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee that *TRF* functions as a front for Lashkar-e-Taiba mea.gov.in. The Foreign Secretary's statement noted that the U.S.-designated TRF took "responsibility," but is effectively the proscribed LeT group acting in the Kashmir theater. Investigations after the attack traced communication to Pakistani handlers, reinforcing India's claims of cross-border terrorism mea.gov.in. In public statements, India stressed that such attacks aim to derail Kashmir's development: the Foreign Secretary noted terrorists hoped to undermine "normalcy returning to Jammu & Kashmir," especially by attacking tourism, thereby creating "fertile ground for continued cross-border terrorism" mea.gov.in.

In response to Pahalgam, the Indian government promptly enacted stricter measures against terrorism. By mid-May 2025, the Cabinet Committee on Security approved sanctions on Pakistan (halting the Indus Waters Treaty, closing trade routes, declaring diplomats persona non grata, etc.) pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. Militarily, India launched **Operation Sindoor**, striking nine terrorist camps on 7 May 2025 across the Line of Control pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. The official goal was "to punish the perpetrators and destroy the infrastructure sustaining cross-border terrorism" with precision and restraint pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. Delhi reported that over 100 militants were killed and several high-value militants (including ones involved in past attacks) were neutralized pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. India emphasized it avoided Pakistani military bases, underscoring that its strikes were "focused, measured and non-escalatory" pib.gov.in.

The Pahalgam incident also elicited global attention. On 25 April 2025, the UN Security Council issued a press statement condemning the attack "in the strongest terms" and calling terrorism "one of the most serious threats to international peace and security" press.un.org. The Council urged all states to cooperate and hold "perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors" accountable press.un.org. Member States from Asia to Europe voiced sympathy and called for combating terrorism within the framework of international law. Meanwhile, Pakistan officially decried the violence but also questioned India's regional policies (as often happens, though official statements are outside UN reports). The episode has thus intensified a longstanding security standoff between India and Pakistan, raising worries of escalation.

Delegates should consider this backdrop: the Pahalgam attack is not an isolated event, but part of a cycle of violence and reaction in South Asia. It highlights challenges of **counter-terrorism** (identification, intelligence, legal response) and the need for peace initiatives (development, dialogue, regional cooperation).

Key Stakeholders

The following **stakeholders** have critical interests in the agenda:

- **Government of India:** Led by Prime Minister and Cabinet, with Home Ministry and Defence, India bears primary responsibility for citizen security and counter-terrorism. Indian security agencies (NIA, police, military) are directly engaged in prevention and response. The government also shapes foreign policy (e.g., diplomacy with Pakistan, appeals at the UN).
- **Government of Pakistan:** Accused by India of supporting militant proxies, Pakistan vehemently denies state involvement. However, its military and intelligence organizations are central to any cross-border security dynamic. Pakistan's reactions (e.g. diplomatic protests, military vigilance) will influence the regional situation.
- **People of Jammu & Kashmir:** Both Hindu and Muslim residents of the region are deeply affected. Kashmiri local authorities (e.g. Lieutenant Governor's office) must balance security measures with protecting civilians. The tourist industry in Kashmir is a critical stakeholder, as the attack targeted tourists and threatens economic recovery.
- **Victims and Families:** The civilian victims (mostly Indian tourists and one Nepali) and their families demand justice and accountability. Their needs (grief support, compensation) and calls for action are politically significant.
- **Regional Organizations:** South Asian bodies like SAARC and regional partners (e.g. Afghanistan, Nepal) are concerned. For example, Nepal lost a citizen in the attack. India's decision to suspend parts of SAARC's visa pact affects neighboring countries.
- **International Community and UN:** The UN Security Council and General Assembly (through bodies like the Counter-Terrorism Committee) are stakeholders in enforcing global norms against terrorism. Countries like the USA, China, EU member-states, and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism monitor developments. China, as a close ally of Pakistan, also has geopolitical interests in India-Pakistan tensions.
- **Terrorist Groups:** Organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, and their local fronts (e.g. TRF) have an interest in continuing conflict. They feed on instability, even as being targeted by security forces. While not "stakeholders" in a diplomatic sense, understanding their motives and networks is essential for policy responses.

These stakeholders have divergent perspectives: India emphasizes security and sovereignty, Pakistan raises counter-allegations, and international actors balance condemnation of terror with calls for restraint. The committee's recommendations will need to account for these interests to be viable.

PAST UN RESOLUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

The fight against terrorism is guided by many UN resolutions and international agreements. Notably:

- **UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GA Res 60/288, 2006):** This landmark General Assembly resolution affirmed that terrorism “constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security”disarmament.unoda.org. It established a four-pillar strategy urging member states to strengthen legal frameworks, human rights protections, capacity-building, and resolution of conditions conducive to terrorism. The Strategy calls for international cooperation to enhance border controls, cut off terror financing, and improve response to attacks. disarmament.unoda.org.
- **Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001):** Adopted after 9/11, it binds all Member States to criminalize terror-financing, freeze assets of suspects, deny safe haven, and share intelligencedfat.gov.au. It led to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) that monitors national efforts. Under 1373, states must prevent their territory from being used for terrorist acts. This UN mandate underscores the obligation of states (like India and Pakistan) to act against terrorism within their borders. dfat.gov.au.
- **Other Relevant SC Resolutions:** Subsequent resolutions have expanded on 1373. For example, SC Res 1566 (2004) condemned attacks on civilians, and Res 2178 (2014) addressed foreign terrorist fighters. The Council also passed resolutions to target terrorism financing (e.g. 2253 in 2015). While not specific to Kashmir, they create a legal framework obligating international cooperation.press.un.org (See also the UN Press Statement [58], which reaffirms “international law and relevant Security Council resolutions” against terrorism).
- **Security Council Press Statement (25 Apr 2025):** After the Pahalgam attack, the UNSC issued a press statement condemning the violence “in the strongest terms”press.un.org. It specifically recognized that “terrorism in all its forms... constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security”press.un.org. The Council “underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors... accountable” and urged states to cooperate in this effortpress.un.org. This press statement (UNSC/PRST/2025/10) is a key international response directly addressing our agenda.

- **International Conventions:** India is a party to conventions like the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. These oblige states to criminalize support for terrorism and exchange information. While not UN resolutions per se, these treaties reinforce the international law framework.

Delegates should reference these instruments where relevant. For example, any proposal to strengthen laws or cooperation should align with Resolution 1373's goals. Likewise, the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy emphasizes addressing "underlying conditions" that terrorist exploitation (such as economic disparity or unresolved disputes).



HOW THE ATTACK AFFECTED GEOPOLITICS

The Pahalgam attack significantly **escalated India–Pakistan tensions**. Within days, India imposed economic and diplomatic sanctions on Pakistan, as outlined above pib.gov.in. Notably, India put the **Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance** and shut the Attari-Wagah border crossing pib.gov.in, moves that alarmed neighbouring countries dependent on the water treaty (e.g. Pakistan, which protested). Pakistan, for its part, summoned India’s envoy and demanded an investigation, calling India’s response “unilateral” (according to its statements).

The **military dimension** was stark: India’s Operation Sindoor (7–8 May 2025) involved cross-border strikes on militant camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. Pakistan protested these strikes as violations of sovereignty and mobilized its forces on the border. Though both sides claimed restraint (India emphasized avoiding Pakistani military targets pib.gov.in, Pakistan said it did not intend to escalate), the risk of wider conflict briefly spiked. The international community, including the USA, EU and China, called for calm. In the UN Security Council consultations on the crisis (May 2025), China and Russia supported a press statement that did **not name Pakistan** explicitly, reflecting Beijing’s backing of Islamabad (as reported elsewhere). This episode illustrated how a single attack can trigger a near-confrontation: analysts labeled early May 2025 an “India–Pakistan crisis” or “near-war” over this chain of events.

In terms of **regional stability**, the incident has strained multilateral ties. Within SAARC, ties have regressed: some member states called for peace but India’s punitive actions (e.g. halting SAARC visa exemptions for Pakistan) have disrupted regional connectivity. Globally, the attack and India’s response highlighted the challenge of *state-sponsored terrorism*. On one hand, India secured strong support from many Western and Asian partners, who “condemned terrorism” along with the UN Council press.un.org. On the other hand, China, and to some extent Pakistan-friendly states, voiced concerns about collateral escalation. The net effect is a geopolitical environment where India’s stance against cross-border terror has broader sympathy, but also where the Kashmir dispute has re-entered international headlines.

Economically, heightened conflict risk can hurt investment in South Asia. Tourist arrivals to India (especially from neighbouring countries) are expected to drop after Pahalgam, impacting revenue. Energy and trade projects across the region might be reassessed if instability seems chronic.

Overall, the Pahalgam attack has reaffirmed global norms against terrorism (as per UNSC language press.un.org) but also underscored that South Asian geopolitics remain volatile. The committee's discussion should account for these dynamics: how to secure India's borders and citizens, yet avoid uncontrollable escalation.

How India Retaliated – Operation Sindoor and Beyond

India's reaction combined **diplomatic, economic, and military measures**. Key steps included:

- **Cabinet Measures:** Within weeks, the Cabinet Committee on Security approved sanctions on Pakistan. India temporarily abeyed the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, closed the Attari-Wagah border for trade, and curtailed Pakistani diplomats (declaring advisors persona non grata and reducing embassy staff) pib.gov.in. Pakistani nationals lost preferential travel under the SAARC visa exemption scheme pib.gov.in. These actions signaled a “united front” stance: India framed them as collective measures against Pakistan's terror support pib.gov.in.
- **Operation Sindoor (7–8 May 2025):** Launched as a “**limited yet precise military campaign**” pib.gov.in, India struck nine terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The Defence Ministry emphasized the strikes targeted militant training infrastructure, not Pakistani military bases pib.gov.in. High-value militants were reportedly killed – India named some leaders linked to past attacks among the fatalities pib.gov.in. Official reports claimed over 100 terrorists were neutralized and that minimal collateral damage occurred pib.gov.in pib.gov.in. The government insisted the operation was measured and constrained (“non-escalatory”) pib.gov.in.
- **Communication:** India simultaneously held press briefings to explain Sindoor. The Foreign Secretary told media that India would hold “organizers, financiers and sponsors” accountable mea.gov.in, echoing the UN's language press.un.org. The narrative emphasized self-defence and enforcement of international law.
- **Intelligence and Law Enforcement:** Internally, India ramped up counter-terror vigilance. Security forces in Kashmir were put on high alert. The National Investigation Agency intensified probes into terror cells, arresting suspects linked to Pahalgam. Intelligence agencies shared new threat information with foreign partners as per UN Strategy guidelines.

- **Counter-Terror Legislation:** The government fast-tracked amendments to certain laws to ensure that anyone aiding such attacks could face swifter trial. Investigative agencies reportedly leveraged enhanced questioning powers to dismantle terror networks.

These measures reflect a doctrine of “**calibrated force**”: punishing terrorist infrastructure while avoiding a full-scale war. Delegates should note the official justification: India framed Sindoor as a fulfillment of its commitment to justice for victims pib.gov.in. Debate may arise whether these actions effectively deter future attacks, or whether they risk retaliation.

The Roots of the Agenda

Underlying this agenda are deep, historical and socio-political factors:

- **Kashmir Conflict:** The contested status of Jammu & Kashmir since 1947 has been the core of bilateral tensions. UN Security Council resolutions from the late 1940s and early 1950s (e.g. Res 47, 51) called for a plebiscite in Kashmir, but these were never implemented. The issue remains unresolved and is often cited by militant groups to recruit. India contends that terrorism in J&K is fueled by Pakistani support, while Pakistan points to Kashmiri self-determination. Though decades-old, this backdrop **fuels mutual distrust** and provides a pretext for militant activity.
- **Cross-Border Terrorism:** The Foreign Secretary’s statement confirmed that the Pahalgam attackers were “Pakistan-trained” LeT militants mea.gov.in. This reflects a pattern: India accuses Pakistan of using terror groups as proxies to wage an asymmetric conflict in Kashmir. Such groups exploit local grievances (political, economic) to operate in India. The UN press statement [58] implicitly acknowledges this by urging states to cut off terror sponsorship press.un.org.
- **Radical Extremism:** Beyond Kashmir, Islamic extremist ideology (linked to global networks) motivates attacks. The targeting of Hindu pilgrims suggests an attempt to inflame sectarian tensions nationwide. Analysts note that groups like LeT and TRF aim to derail communal harmony in India. The UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy notes that grievances, alienation, and identity-based narratives can fuel terrorism disarmament.unoda.org. Addressing these “root causes” – such as poverty, lack of education, or political injustice – is part of the international strategy. In J&K,

some propose that facilitating economic development and preserving cultural rights could undercut militant recruitment.

- **Regional Power Dynamics:** The Pahalgam attack also has roots in broader South Asian rivalries. India and Pakistan have long competed for influence. Even when the Kashmir insurgency was local, it was internationalized via jihadist networks. Today, Pakistan's military and intelligence emphasis on this front means that any security breach is viewed through a geopolitical lens. The committee should recognize that terrorism here is not just crime but a form of low-intensity conflict.
- **Precedent of Past Attacks:** The context includes past events (e.g. 2001 Parliament attack, 2008 Mumbai, 2019 Pulwama) where terrorism led India to consider retaliatory options. Each such event informed current policies. For instance, lessons from Pulwama triggered parliamentary debates on giving armed forces greater latitude (the "presumption of culpability"). History shows India oscillating between negotiation and force, shaping today's cautious yet firm posture.

In sum, the agenda's roots lie in the **intersection of terrorism, unresolved conflict, and political objectives**. The UN strategy's emphasis on combating the conditions conducive to terror suggests the committee also consider long-term peacebuilding in J&K, not just short-term security fixes disarmament.unoda.org. Understanding these roots will help delegates formulate balanced policies that address symptoms and causes of terrorism, in line with both national interests and international norms.

SUGGESTIONS

Below are potential suggestions the committee may consider. Delegates are encouraged to expand or refine these with supporting evidence:

- **Strengthen Intelligence & Inter-Agency Coordination:** Propose enhanced collaboration between India's federal agencies (NIA, RAW) and state police (ATS units). For instance, India's Home Minister has stressed cooperation between NIA and state ATS to prevent financing and planning of terror attacks pib.gov.in. Improved data-sharing platforms and joint task forces in Jammu & Kashmir could help detect plots early.
- **Tighten Border Security:** Recommend augmenting surveillance and security along the Line of Control (LoC) and international border with Pakistan. Technology (drones, sensors) and increased patrols can help intercept infiltration. Any measure should follow international law; proposals might include inviting UN observers or back-channel talks to reduce cross-border firing.
- **Curb Terror Financing and Radicalization:** India and partners should follow Resolution 1373 by cracking down on money flows to extremist groups. Delegate proposals could include financial action plans in coordination with UN CTED. Domestically, improving banking oversight and adopting biometric ID systems could thwart hawala and cash movements linked to terrorists. Internationally, India could seek renewed UN sanctions on listed groups (e.g. LeT) to freeze assets.
- **Counter-Extremist Ideology:** Suggest initiatives for counter-radicalization, such as educational programs and community outreach in vulnerable areas (particularly in Jammu & Kashmir). The UN Strategy urges addressing "conditions conducive to" terrorism. Development projects and dialogue in conflict-affected regions may undercut militant recruitment. For example, offering economic incentives to youth at risk and supporting moderate religious voices.
- **Respect Human Rights:** Any security measure should respect human rights and rule of law. Propose independent monitoring of counter-terror operations to maintain public trust. The UNSC Press Statement [58] reminds states to combat terrorism "in

accordance with...the Charter...including international human rights law.” For instance, ensuring quick trial for detainees or judicial oversight of surveillance.

- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Encourage simultaneous diplomatic outreach to de-escalate India-Pakistan tensions. This might involve calling for renewed talks under the Shimla Agreement, or using third-party mediation (e.g. through the UN Secretary-General’s good offices). Resuming dialogue on broader issues (overflights, people-to-people exchanges) can complement hard security measures. The committee might suggest a special session of SAARC or UN-mediated talks focusing on terrorism and Kashmir.
- **Regional Counter-Terrorism Cooperation:** Propose leveraging multilateral forums (like the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee, or SCO/SAARC) to build a regional strategy. This could include joint military exercises against terror or a regional watchlist. In particular, delegates might call upon neighbouring countries (Afghanistan, China) to support a non-militarized solution in Kashmir.
- **Legislative Reforms:** The committee can recommend strengthening India’s laws (e.g. updating the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) to deal with evolving threats, while guarding against misuse. For example, incorporating lessons from recent attacks into training for police and military. Also, enhancing parliamentary oversight (through more frequent reviews) of anti-terror measures.
- **United Nations Support:** Suggest that India continue to work with UN bodies. For instance, India could host or co-sponsor a UN counter-terrorism capacity-building program or back resolution drafts on terrorism. Encouraging more regular reports to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) will keep international focus on curbing cross-border terrorism.

Each suggestion should be supported by precedents or expert analysis where possible. For example, India’s own Home Ministry conference in 2024 advocated similar measures [pib.gov.in](https://pib.gov.in/pib.gov.in). The committee should also be mindful of *feasibility* and *international reception* of recommendations.

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